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Watson's Art Journal.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOV. 26, 1867.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, CLINTON HALL, ASTOR PLACE.

NOTICE.—The Publication Office of the ART-JOURNAL, will be, after this date, in Clinton Hall Building, Astor Place, next door to the Savings Bank, where subscriptions and advertisements will be received.

Editorial Rooms, 806 Broadway.

Advertisements for the current week, must be sent in before noon on Friday.

MUSICAL AGENCY.—Frequent applications are made to us, for musicians in the various branches of the profession, Opera, Concerts, the Church, Teaching, &c. Parties who desire to be entered upon our register, can do so by applying at our business office, Clinton Buildings, Astor Place.

THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

The first rehearsal of the 26th season of this old and justly-popular Society took place on Friday, the 25th instant, at the Academy of Music, and was highly satisfactory in every point of view.

We have been accustomed for years to look to the Philharmonic Society for the highest and most *recherche* of intellectual musical feasts, and the record which each season leaves behind it fully proves that our expectations have rarely been disappointed—never wholly and seldom even in part. Like the religious institutions of old, it is the sanctuary in which the Art has been fostered, honored, preserved and exemplified, and to it the admiration and veneration of every true musician is due. It is their duty to sustain it not only by their social and professional influence, but by their means, for there is no musician, be he never so eminent, but who, in the dearth of high-toned entertainments, owes to this Society an irredeemable debt of exquisite, unalloyed and profound delight. Its superb rendering of the highest class of music, has elevated and continues to elevate the musical art, and for that alone all musicians should rally round it, and carry it through each season triumphantly.

We have often heard it sneeringly observed that the members were all for money-making, and really cared nothing for art, and the speakers were profoundly satisfied with their Bunsby-like opinion. What are the facts of the case, however? For twenty years the members have stood by the good cause, through good and evil fortune, and if the fortune was good or evil, they were equally earnest in the performance of the work they set out to accomplish. Every

year the members risk their time, which is their bread, devoting to the Art fifteen rehearsals, five concerts, together with private rehearsals, of which the public knows nothing, on the mere chance that the public will appreciate their efforts. If it does, they receive a dividend; but take the average of the seasons and we shall find that they have not received the ordinary pay for their labor, while in this case they take all the risk. If a course so unswerving and so unselfish does not evidence something beyond mere mercenary motives, then we do not know where to look for disinterestedness.

That the policy of societies will often appear to trench upon the rights of individuals is undeniable; but it is the history of all time, and where so many interests are involved, it can hardly be otherwise. All that can be expected or hoped for is, that the judgment will be calm, and that prejudice and party feeling may be merged in the general desire to act frankly and courteously, for the best interests of the Society and its subscribers. Their interests are identical; for it must be remembered, that if the one has prejudices and preferences, so has the other, and perfect success can only be achieved by mutual concession.

We have said that the programme for the season will give general satisfaction, and we publish it below to sustain our opinion. The orchestra which has always been unapproachable in this country, will be augmented this season to one hundred performers, thus lessening the chances of a large dividend, but raising the band to a numerical efficiency never before attained by a society in this country. Nor is it mere numbers added, but the increase will consist of the best artists in the city, and we may confidently expect orchestral performances which will defy all competition, and beside which, in perfection and power, all others will be inevitably dwarfed.

The election of Dr. Doremus as President of the Society, not because of a lack of efficient men among its members, but because, for many reasons, it is better to have that office filled by a non-professional man. It draws the Institution closer to Society, and attracts to it powerful influences which could not otherwise exist. The result of this choice is already seen in the increased vitality of its movements. It has dashed out as though assured of its position, and of its popularity; and we shall be greatly mistaken if the coming season does not prove the most brilliant of its existence. At any rate, our hope is equal to our faith, and again we say, to musical professors and amateurs, put your shoulders to the wheel, and give the fine old Philharmonic, which has just passed its silver art-wedding, a bold and sure start on the way to its golden period of existence—1892.

The following is the instrumental programme for the season:

FIRST CONCERT.—Symphony, "Pastoral"—Beethoven; Overture, "Manfred"—Schumann; Poem Symphonique, "Mazeppa"—Liszt.

SECOND CONCERT.—Symphony, in C—Schubert; Overture, "Othello," (1st time)—Ritter; Overture, "Calm at Sea and Happy Voyage"—Mendelssohn.

THIRD CONCERT.—Overture, "Jessonda"—Spohr; Choral Symphony, No. 9—Beethoven.

FOURTH CONCERT.—Symphony No. 1, in G minor—Mozart; Introduction to "Lohengrin"—Wagner; Symphony, in A major—Mendelssohn.

FIFTH CONCERT.—Symphony No. 1, in B flat—Schumann; Poem Symphonique, "Héroïde Funèbre," (1st time)—Liszt; Overture, "Freyschütz"—Weber.

Mr. Carl Bergmann, conductor for the season.

THE BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

We have many kind and warm words of cordial welcome for this enterprising and excellent Society, which enters next Saturday, Nov. 9th, on the eleventh year of its existence. Totally differing in its constitution from the New York Philharmonic Society, inasmuch as it is non-professional in its government, its promoters and sustainers are entitled to the highest credit and praise for their liberality and disinterestedness, which could only have sprung out of a true and earnest love and appreciation of the highest style of musical art. The Directors have not had a thornless path to travel—they have not slept on roses. They took all the risk of the vast expenses from the first, and a series of fine concerts and brilliant seasons resulted from their energy, influence, and business tact. But the period of the war tried their pluck, as it did that of very many others, and gloomy prognostications, and significant shoulder shrugs greeted them everywhere; but, to use an expressive idiomatic figure of speech, they stood up and faced the music; and as the music they faced was unquestionably good, they soon brought the public to their way of thinking, and fought their way through the difficulty successfully.

There certainly is no profit in their labor beyond the profit that accrues to the best interests of art, and the unqualified pleasure they derive from their labor's results. The profit derived is not theirs, but accumulates a fund to render future concerts more brilliant and efficient, while they have to provide for any loss that may accrue. So we say again, success and welcome to the young, but healthy and stalwart Philharmonic Society of Brooklyn, younger but worthy sister of our Philharmonic Society of New York.

We believe that the Instrumental pro-

gramme for the season has not been published, but the following are the fine works selected for the first concert of the 11th season, which takes place on Saturday, the 9th inst., at the Academy of Music:

Sinfonie No. 5, op. 67 in C minor, Beethoven—1. Allegro con brio. 2. Andante con moto. 3. Scherzo—Allegro. 4. Finale.—Allegro.

Overture,—"Benvenuto Cellini," (new)—Berlioz.

Theme and Variations—National Austrian Hymn (new)—Haydn. For String Orchestra.

Trumpet Overture (new)—Mendelssohn. Mr. Theodore Thomas, Conductor for the Season.

The Second Concert will take place on Saturday evening, Dec. 14th; the third on Saturday evening, Jan. 26th, 1868; the fourth on Saturday evening, February 22d, and the fifth on Saturday evening, April 4th.

The following are the Officers for the year 1867-8:

Luther B. Wyman, President; Charles Congdon, 1st Vice-President; H. K. Sheldon, 2d Vice-President; A. Cooke Hull, Treasurer; C. B. Loomis, Secretary; Wm. Poole, Chairman of Executive Committee; R. R. Raymond, Chas. A. Townsend, Alex. V. Blake, George Wm. Warren, Chairman Music Committee—Executive Committee.

E. S. Mills, John T. Howard, Wm. B. Kendall, John B. Woodward, James L. Nichols, L. S. Burnham, F. F. H. Lummus, Edward Lambert, Jas. How, Jr., W. H. Husted, Bryan H. Smith, Chas. W. Lord, Julius Ives, Jr., Henry Sanger, W. T. Hatch.

WHAT THE THEATRES ARE DOING.

This never-tiring theme comes freshly up day after day, and though it is only to mention the fact that the "Black Crook" has entered upon its eleven thousand and seventh night, it is an interesting item to the public to know it; even though that public may be hoeing corn upon the far off wilds of Peoria, it is still a satisfaction for it to know that there is a chance for its children and grandchildren to enjoy all that it has enjoyed.

With this text, we take great pleasure in announcing to that citizen of Peoria that the feature of the week has been, as the bills express it, "a grand Shakespearian revival," just as though Shakespeare could be *revived*, the said revival being nothing more nor less than the playing of "Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Olympic, with all the aid that house could render it in the way of scenic effect, machinery and costumes.

The "Midsummer Night's Dream," strictly, ought not to be called a play, but rather a poem. It is a series of fanciful ideas strung upon a thread of dialogue, and illustrated by scenery; without plot or positive intention beyond that of amusing. In the characters there is no strength, save only those of the hard-handed men of Athens; Oberon, Titania,

and the others being merely pretty nothings put in to fill out the scene.

The star of the evening was Miss Fannie Stockton, who, as Oberon, made about as good looking a fairy as one would wish to see on a summer day, or an October evening. The name of Miss Stockton will be familiar as once of Maretzek's company. Her voice is a soprano, rich and sympathetic, and, as a rare fact among those who sing on the operatic stage, her enunciation is clear and distinct. Miss Fannie is pretty, wonderfully so, with a most artistical leg—as much a necessity as a good voice—and a pleasant manner that shows a desire to please. This said, we must note as the most prominent of Miss Fannie's defects, the fact that she fails to walk the stage with ease, and in one or two instances was absolutely awkward. The difficulty with which Oberon stooped to gather the shower of bouquets that came upon the stage on the first night, argued either overtight tights or a stiffness in the knees rather embarrassing. Outside of this, Miss Fannie Stockton made the most charming Oberon ever seen upon the New York stage, and will win, during the run of this piece, all the laurels she really deserves as a charming vocalist and actress, and an estimable lady.

The difficult character of the piece, difficult physically, was done by Master Willie Young. Puck has heretofore bothered managers from the fact that while the character should be played by a child, a child could not be found who had any conception of the character. We who remember the frightful Puck of Mrs. Knight—she weighed two hundred—in the old Park days, can appreciate this. For Master Willie it is only necessary to say that he did his work well, and with about as little of the school-boy mouthing as could be expected from a gentleman of twelve years.

The next character of note was that of Bottom, and here we fall into a vein of thought. How it could be that Mr. George L. Fox, who is really a decent clown for a pantomime, should so suddenly be transplanted to a Broadway stage, in such a character, is in itself one of those marvelous things known only to managers, but how Mr. Fox should have been permitted to assume the rôle of Bottom, when Mr. Davidge was in the company, is more than we can account for, even in the vagaries of managers, save from the fact that Mr. Fox is the stage manager, and, as such makes up the cast, with the power, if he chooses, to bestow on himself all the characters in the piece. We are, therefore, only grateful that he did not take it into his head to play Oberon, and thank him for his graciousness in allowing it to remain in the hands of Miss Stockton. What to say in criticism of his rendering of the character, we do not know; but think, perhaps, the best would be to re-

peat the words of Charles Kean, when he was asked if he had seen Phelps play Bottom. "His Bottom? Eh! Yes, I've seen it, and, I'd like to kick it."

Mr. Davidge did Quince, and, as is everything done by this clever actor, he did it well, and in doing it as completely overshadowed Bottom, as though Quince were the primary character. We have seen Mr. Davidge play Bottom in years ago, and our memory of it did not assist us in judging leniently of Mr. G. L. Fox's attempt.

Of the scenic effects we cannot speak too highly. There were several scenes and transformations that are worthy of especial mention, but the last grand transformation is so infinitely beyond anything we have ever seen in this country, that it beggars description. The panorama of Athens by Telbin, the great English scene-painter, was artistically beautiful, and to the highest degree effective.

And last, though not least, the good music of Mendelssohn was beautifully rendered under the direction of Mr. Rieff, dividing admiration with the work of the artist and the skill of the player.

Midsummer Night's Dream, we take it for granted, will run for the next two months, to the very great satisfaction of the treasury.

At Banvard's, the Devil's Auction, under the stimulation of Morlacchi's appearance, has been nothing but a jam the past week. This charming danseuse grows upon estimation, and has elicited from criticism the award of the highest position ever held by any lady in the saltatorial art. There is a decision and force in her execution, and an easy grace that makes the stage her own, and brings nightly such applause and showers of bouquets as illustrates the fact that the public know it and appreciate.

There are rumors both in connection with this house and of Niblo's, of new pieces, but we fail to see how this end can be reached for a few months yet to come, with such crowds rushing to see the present ones.

The Duchess pursues the even tenor—or soprano—of her way. Bateman has a marvelous facility in producing prima donnas; for, during the past week Mlle. Tostee, having been taken suddenly ill, almost at a moment's notice, ——— took her place, and rather than disappoint a crowded and expectant house, the opera went on to the satisfaction of the audience, who, instead of crying, as would be expected, "Tostee, or nothing," accepted the situation. The charming little donna is well again, and all goes merry as Offenbach, Tostee, and Bateman can make it go.

Boston will have the honor of first welcoming Charles Dickens. He is expected to give his first Reading there about the 20th of November.